

Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 SAM-01 SAB-01 ACDA-05

SCCT-01 /083 W

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O 060810Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8886

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SANAAA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION USUN NY

USICNCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK

COMMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
DIA WASHDC
CIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, PPINT, LE
SUBJ: TRUCE MECHANISM FACING FIRST SEVERE TEST

1. THE HIGHER MILITARY COMMITTEE JOINING LEBANESE, SYRIAN, AND PALESTINIAN OFFICERS TO SUPERVISE TRUCE IS FACING ITS FIRST CRISIS. ARMED CLASHES ERUPTED MARCH 4 IN NORTH LEBANON, AND TENSION QUICKLY SPREAD TO BEIRUT AAREA. PIECED TOGETHER FROM OUR SOURCES, FACTS APPEAR TO BE AS FOLLOWS:

2. INCIDENT BEGAN MORNING MARCH 4 AT ROADBLOCK SET UP BY FOLLOWER OF DESERTER MAJ. AHMAD AL-MAMARY IN AKKAR REGION. (MAMARY HEADS LOOSE RENEGADE FORCE MAINLY INDEPENDENT OF MORE CELEBRATED LT. AL-KHATIB IN BEKAA VALLEY.) ROADBLOCK STOPPED MEMBER OF JAAFARS, SHIITE TRIBE IN REGION, AND ROBBED HIM OF LARGE SUM OF MONEY (VARIOUSLY PUT AT BETWEEN LL10,000 AND LL50,000). AS WORD SPREAD, JAAFARS MISTAKENLY THOUGHT DEED WAS DONE BY INHABITANTS OF CHRISTIAN VILLAGE OF QUBAYAT. JAAFARS SURROUNDED VILLAGE. ONE REPORT SAYS FORCES OF MAJ.MAMARY AND POSSIBLY ALSO SOME PALESTINIAN REJECTIONISTS MOVED IN TO HELP JAAFARS IN SIEGE. EXCHANGES OF FIRE MARCH 4 RESULTED IN SEVERAL DEAD AND WOUNDED ON BOTH SIDES.

3. WHEN NEWS OF SIEGE REACHED JOUNIEH NEAR BEIRUT, WHERE MANY CHRISTIAN REFUGEES FROM ROUND 4 FIGHTING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN AKKAR ARE STAYING, THESE REFUGEES SET UP ROADBLOCKS ON BEIRUT-TRIPOLI ROAD AND STARTED KIDNAPPING MOSLEMS. ALSO, CHRISTIAN ARMY PERSONNEL FROM AKKAR STATIONED IN CASERNES AT BEIRUT AND JOUNIEH STAGED NEAR-MUTINY WHEN THEY HEARD OF EVENT, DEMANDING PERMISSION OF SUPERIORS TO PROCEED NORTHWARD AND BREAK SIEGE. TEMPERS OF SOLDIERS CALMED WITH DIFFICULTY. MOST OF MOSLEMS KIDNAPPED AT JOUNIEH LATER RELEASED, THOUGH PRESS

STATES SEVERAL WERE KILLED WHILE HELD.

4. INTERVENTION LATE MARCH 4 BY ARMY UNITS AND PLA REPORTEDLY BROUGHT SEMBLANCE OF CALM TO QUBAYAT. PRES FRANGIE HAS CONFERRED WITH CAMILLE CHAMOUN ON PROBLEM, IN LATTER'S CAPACITY AS INTERIOR MINISTER. HIGHER MILITARY COMMITTEE TAKING CHARGE OF INCIDENT AND HOPES RESOLVE IT SOON. CONTACTS UNDERWAY THROUGH MARONITE MONK HEAD FATHER KASSIS AND IMAM MUSA SADR HOPEFULLY WILL HELP DAMPEN CHRISTIAN AND SHIITE REACTIONS. A KATAEB LEADER HAS TOLD US HIS PARTY WISHES TO STAY OUT OF FIGHT.

5. COMMENT: THOUGH EPISODE SEEMS SUCCESSFULLY CONTAINED SO FAR, IT HAS ROUSED APPREHENSION AMONG BEIRUTIS. IT AMPLY ILLUSTRATES FRAGILITY OF CEASE-FIRE, AND PARTICULARLY THE DANGERS INHERENT IN UNSOLVED PROBLEM OF DESERTERS. ON OTHER HAND, IF HIGHER MILITARY COMMITTEE CAN PUT OUT THIS FIRE, IT WILL HAVE PROVED ITSELF IN FIRST MAJOR TEST.
LAMBRAKIS

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